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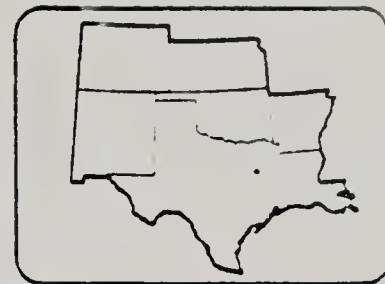
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August 18, 1980

Food Safety Laboratory to be Dedicated in St. Louis

Senator Thomas Eagleton (D.-Mo.) and Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Carol Tucker Foreman will speak at the dedication of the new USDA laboratory facility in St. Louis at 10 a.m., Thursday, Aug. 28.

"Strong scientific support is vital in meeting the consumer protection responsibilities of the federal meat and poultry inspection program," Foreman said. "This laboratory will provide even greater assurance of safe and wholesome meat and poultry products."

A tour of the midwestern laboratory will follow the ceremony, to be held in the auditorium, Bldg. No. 105-L of the Federal Center, 4300 Goodfellow Blvd. The laboratory, operated by USDA's Food Safety and Quality Service, is on the second floor (south end) of Bldg. No. 105 of the complex.

An arsenal for manufacturing ammunition during World War II, the Federal Center now houses military and other government offices. Remodeling for the 30,000 square foot laboratory cost approximately \$4 million. The laboratory has an annual budget of \$2 million and 65 employees.

Carrying out the federal inspection laws, USDA scientists assure the safety and wholesomeness of raw and processed meat and poultry through testing for hazardous contaminants. Meat and poultry is checked for disease, bacteria, toxins and residues of unsafe chemicals--such as pesticides, drugs or environmental contaminants.

Also, the food scientists run tests on processed meat and poultry products to assure accurate labeling for fat, water, and protein, and other ingredients.

"The new laboratory will help make the inspection process more efficient and scientific," Foreman said. "The move follows last year's consolidation of five USDA laboratories into three locations--St. Louis, San Francisco, and Athens, Ga. In that consolidation, the USDA chemistry sections in Kansas City, Kan., and Peoria, Ill., were closed in late 1979."

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